



# Citrep

## Newsletter of the Murray Valley Citrus Board

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Robert Mansell, Chairman MVCB

## Chairman's Report

The Navel season is underway and already there is quite a lot of small and marked fruit being harvested. Also acid levels have dropped off very early this season.

*Currently, a number of factors have arisen that we need to be aware of.*

The Fresh Fruit Marketing and Processing Forum held in Mildura on 3 May, 2005 made the industry aware of a larger Valencia crop than forecast nationally. Further, increased imported fresh juice by processors, will mean that limited supplies of Navels for juice will be required, and at extremely low returns.

Concentrate prices are also at an all time low. There is enough unharvested Valencia fruit, as well as stored juice (not from concentrate) held by processors to almost see them through to the next Valencia season, or at least until October. (There will be an updated Valencia crop forecast later in the season.) The issue of finding a home for overrun fruit (or its responsible disposal) is one that is challenging us at the moment, as the remaining Valencia crop which is uncontracted, can only go to processing. South Australia has approximately 10,000 tonnes of uncontracted Valentinas, the MVCB 5,000 tonnes and the Riverina has 13,000 tonnes.

The Navel crop forecast for this season indicates that the MVCB and the Riverland volumes have increased while the Riverina remains the same. It is anticipated that South Australia will produce 70,000 tonnes, MVCB 105,000 tonnes (up from 80,000) and the Riverina 59,000 tonnes.

For a number of years the Board has had concerns about how to deal with Navel overrun, particularly when all the new plantings come into production. This challenge has arrived, and we have to handle the situation in a responsible manner or change our attitude and expectations on the value of this fruit. As the season progresses the Board will make every effort to keep growers informed on these issues.

Official access to China has again eluded us. It highlights the question of the value of Australia pushing for an FTA. Supplying markets is becoming more difficult instead of easier.

The MVCB has been working on its Strategic Plan as part of the requirements set out in the new legislation, under which we currently operate. The Board also had to have budgets for 2005-06 prepared by April, in order to put our programs before growers to be endorsed before 30 June, 2005.

Preparing the budgets and setting out the programs as required in the legislation has been a very time consuming job for staff and the finance audit committee. I would like to acknowledge the huge amount of work put in by the staff to get this finalised, bearing in mind that the general day to day running of the office had to continue.

The Melbourne Market Committee, which has been driven by the MVCB, has had meetings with merchants on a regular basis to co-ordinate promotions in Melbourne and Victoria, financed through a levy from merchants. This Committee has been chaired by Mick Hollingworth and organised by Des McNamara. David Hunt-Sharman is a Board representative on this Committee.

The Murray Valley Citrus Board held its Annual Meeting on 19 May, at which growers were required to vote on the 2005-06 budget and programs. Growers voted in favour of all the programs, but some clear messages were sent to the Board and we will need to look more closely at how some of the programs are managed. I would like to acknowledge those growers who made the effort to attend the consultative meetings to cast their vote.

It looks like we are in for a very difficult Navel season, but I hope we can all do better than earlier predictions have indicated.

**Robert Mansell Chairman MVCB**



# Chief Executive's Report

John Tesoriero, Chief Executive MVCB

## Congratulations Peter Morrish

MVCB Industry Development Officer, Peter Morrish, has been appointed Executive Officer, Riverina Citrus and will take up his appointment on Monday, 20 June 2005.

Peter has made a very positive contribution to the Murray Valley Citrus Board over the past seven years and we all wish him well in his future role.

I am sure Peter will find the new position of Executive Officer at Riverina challenging and rewarding and assist him greatly in his overall career development.

### Melbourne Markets Move North

The Murray Valley Citrus Board is pleased at the site chosen for the new Melbourne Market. The facility will move from Footscray (home for the Markets since 1969) to Epping in the north in 2010.

The 5 year lead time for the relocation will allow relevant authorities and stakeholders to plan and ensure the development of a state of the art market facility.

The Board was advised last year of the Victorian Government's intention to relocate the Market, with various sites being canvassed. The Board's view was that a location to the north of Melbourne would be very appropriate from a transport and logistics perspective and we are very pleased with the location chosen.

### Strategic Plan 2005-2008

The Board has completed its strategic plan for the 2005-2008 financial years and in doing so worked with key stakeholders and staff to review our vision, mission, goals and objectives. The planning process was facilitated by Leonie Burrows, currently Acting Executive Director of Australian Citrus Growers.

**Our Vision** is simply defined as '*Success in Citrus*' i.e. focusing on sustainability and the profitability of our key stakeholders.

**Our Mission** is to '*Lead the Murray Valley Citrus Industry to sustained profitability through communication, research, extension, market information, promotion and environmental responsibility*'.

The Strategic Plan focuses on our Growers recognising their importance, our Industry and finally our Organisation, with goals, objectives and strategies for each category. The strategic goals and objectives for each of the above categories are as follows:

#### Our Growers

##### Goal

**'Assisting Growers to achieve a profitable return based on best practice'.**

##### Objectives

- Encourage greater uptake of Best Practice and supportive technology.
- Provide high quality industry data to assist growers assess opportunities and make informed business decisions.

- Maintain involvement in promotional strategies for the benefit of MVCB growers.
- Encourage risk minimisation by growers.
- Provide opportunities for grower input and communication.

#### Our Industry

##### Goal

**'Providing Industry Leadership for development and profitability'.**

##### Objectives

- Plan, fund and facilitate market development and maintenance.
- Instigate market driven research and development and industry adoption.
- Liaise with other industry organisations to maximise efficient use of resources.
- Promote industry awareness of required management and accreditation systems.

#### Our Organisation

##### Goal

**'We will be an efficient, accountable and professional organisation'.**

##### Objectives

- Provide effective leadership and advocacy.
- A focus on customer satisfaction.
- Maintain high standards of corporate governance.

The Strategic Plan can be accessed via our website [www.mvcitrus.org.au](http://www.mvcitrus.org.au).

The Board completed its Operational Plan and Budget for the 2005-06 financial year. Details were sent to all Murray Valley citrus growers for their information and consideration prior to a vote at the Board's Annual General Meeting on 19 May 2005.

Under the Industry Development Act 1990, citrus growers must approve the Board's budgets and programs by voting at the AGM either in person or by proxy.

I am pleased to advise that our Operational Plan and Budget were approved by growers at the above Annual General Meeting.

**John Tesoriero Chief Executive MVCB**



# Blood Orange Growers to Unite

Growers of Blood Oranges in the Riverland and Murray Valley are to unite for promotion and marketing volume, starting with the 2005 harvest season.

Information meetings in late May brought growers up to date with the progress of the Blood Orange Growers Committee established in 2004.

The Committee, consisting of grower, packer and Board representatives from both regions, has been working through logistics, marketing plans, branding and promotional material to co-ordinate a united front on Blood Oranges.

Favco, a Queensland based marketing company, has been recommended by the Committee to growers to undertake marketing on their behalf. This should in no way affect the relationships that have already been established between growers and packers. Favco will manage the information flow between markets, growers and packers. They will work with currently established grower/packer/marketer relationships when informed.

Favco have been instrumental in the development of promotional material and branding of netbags and cartons. A generic brand of 'Aussie Blood Oranges' will be promoted. Promotion in the Adelaide region will also include a flyer developed by Andrew Christophides, during the Citrus Board of South Australia's 'Lead-On' program in 2004.

The Murray Valley Citrus Board is assisting in the establishment of the group, acting as treasurer and contact point for the association. The Citrus Board of South Australia has also assisted in the development of this group.

Growers from outside the Murray Valley and Riverland are very welcome to be included and should contact the MVCB on 03 5051 0500 for details. This is also the case for growers within the regions who have not been contacted by either the MVCB or Citrus Board of South Australia to date.

For further information please contact the MVCB office on 03 50510500.

## Preparing Orchards for Market Access into Korea

During April 2005, the Murray Valley Citrus Board continued with the work of past seasons, in assisting Murray Valley orchards to gain access to Korean Markets.

Orchards nominated through packingsheds to AQIS before March 18, were required to have leaf inspections for four pathogens, undertaken by AQIS accredited officers. Murray Valley field representatives Des McNamara and Peter Morrish undertook these inspections on behalf of growers at no charge.

Orchards also had to be inspected for Fullers Rose Weevil, a pest of concern to Korea. This was undertaken by trained crop protection officers, co-ordinated by the packingsheds. The MVCB funded and co-ordinated training with NSW DPI for people who wished to be accredited as crop protection officers. Those who trained last season retained their accreditation.

This is the fifth season that the leaf inspections have been managed by the MVCB and it is planned to continue to provide this service to the industry.

Advertise your service or product in the next issue of



Advertising rates can be found on the back page of this issue.  
For further information about advertising in Citrep please contact  
Kerry at the MVCB office on 03 5021 1890.

# Succession Planning



Sheridan Alm (centre) with other participants at the 'Lead On' Citrus Leadership Training Course.

Developing potential leaders in the citrus industry has been a goal of the Citrus Board of South Australia during the past two years.

In conjunction with Horticulture Australia Limited, FarmBis SA and Berri Limited, two courses have been conducted under the 'Lead On' Leadership Development, Citrus Program. (Peter Morrish, MCVB attended the 2004 course at the Barmera Country Club and a report of his presentation 'Increasing Accuracy in Crop Forecasting' and 'Factual Standards for Budgeting' appeared in the last edition of Citrep.)

Sheridan Alm was also a participant in the program. Sheridan is married with two children and is part of a 100 hectare Citrus and Winegrape family business in the Riverland, South Australia.

She holds a Bachelor of Applied Science in Environmental Management and spent six years working with Fruit Doctors (a horticultural consultancy firm based in Loxton SA and operating in the Victorian and NSW growing regions).

Sheridan delivered the following paper at the 'Lead On' Citrus Leadership Training Course.

*The future of our industry is in the hands of tomorrow's growers. In the past we have encouraged our children to seek rewarding careers outside the farm and our rural communities, instilling in them that the most satisfying vocations will be found in our cities. I am sure you have all heard the saying or perhaps even breathed it yourself, "If you don't do well at school, you'll end up back on the block like I did"*

*However young people growing up on a fruit block are placed in a unique learning situation where they are involved in every day business decisions made at the kitchen table and from the tractor seat. The instincts developed by our children to recognise, identify and deal with situations to do with soil, water, the weather and their environment is an invaluable asset not fully appreciated or encouraged.*

*Of no lesser importance than the environmental plight of the River Murray, inflated fuel prices and the rising Australian Dollar is the issue of "Succession". The facts are somewhat alarming, 99.6% of farms in Australia are family owned and less than one third of these will survive the transition to the next generation. The average age of the Australian farmer has risen from 49 to 54 years over the last 20 years. It is estimated that 25% of farmers expect to retire in the next 5 years with 50% of these having no plans in place for the*

*transfer of their assets to the next generation or the preparation of their business for sale. Either way there is going to be a lot of land changing hands over the next five to ten years.*

What is Succession Planning? A definition of the word "succession", is the act or process of one person taking the place of another. Hence creating a succession plan is more than planning for your retirement it is also the choosing and grooming of a "successor". Statistics show that early planning not only ensures a smooth transfer of assets but increases the viability of your enterprise and the happiness of those in it. It's no good saying that "We don't have any problems" or "I have a will, isn't that enough", while there are people there are problems. These conflicts can be resolved, but it's going to take thought, lots of discussion and probably some compromise.

Succession planning is a continuing process rather than an event. Good succession planning is sometimes referred to as the "Four A's".

**ASSESSMENT** – Review your whole family situation, including its assets and liabilities

Discuss with your partner;

- When and where do you want to retire?
- How much money will you need for your retirement lifestyle?
- What is the best way to obtain this money? What are your resources and limitations?
- Do you want the entire farm to stay in the family?
- Is the transfer of your business to the next generation a viable option. Are my children capable of running the business? Are they interested?"
- If a potential successor is not identified then your business should be prepared for and conducted as if for sale.
- Can your business support another family and assist non farming children in their interests as well?

**AIMS** – Using your family values as guidelines, work with your partner and family to identify your retirement, family and business goals.

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Have all family members put their personal and business aims, ideas and requests in writing;

- What are the aims of the second generation. Are they committed to the enterprise as it is run today or do they have improvements in mind or plans to diversify.
- Succession is also about change, think outside the fruit block. Your truck driving son, and wine making daughter may all have a place in your plan.

Conduct a family meeting for all members (including non-farming children) on neutral ground with a planned agenda. This could be facilitated by an independent professional such as a Rural Counselor or your accountant or solicitor. Discuss at the meeting;

- Parents wishes and entitlements.
- Key issues and options for the future.
- Fair distribution of assets between children (fair is not always equal)
- Provisions for non-farming children (development of off farm assets)
- Decide on a common aim such as "To work together in a family fruit growing venture in a happy, caring and profitable environment"
- Ensure all children understand what is being looked for in a successor, it may be decided that qualifications/experience and competence or their position in the family is the criteria.

A family meeting must allow for honest and open communication, for views to be heard and respected, including non farming family members and clearly examine the needs and wants of all parties. Most importantly ensure siblings agree with one another.

**ADVICE – A good succession plan is built on good advice.**  
Seek good advice from your accountant, bank manager, solicitor and/or financial advisor on the following issues in order to completely understand your options.

- Business Structure (partnerships, companies and family trusts)
- Land Holding Structures
- Income Tax and Capital Gains Tax
- Superannuation and Stamp Duty
- Wills and Insurance
- CentreLink eligibility
- Family and Testamentary Trusts
- Development of off farm assets

#### **ACTION – Develop your Succession Plan**

- Present your plan to family members. Further family discussion will be necessary. Don't give up now.
- Set dates for passing on the management of farm duties, management of finances and eventually ownership.
- Review your plan annually to ensure it still suits your family situation, and incorporate and changes such as births, deaths, marriages (and divorces) and other financial changes.
- Work with professionals to use any tax and legal changes that could benefit your plan.
- Continue to communicate regularly via formal family meetings with minutes and agenda.

And always remember, 'We don't plan to fail, we fail to plan'

#### **Murray Valley Leadership Course**

The MVCB has applied for funding from Horticulture Australia to conduct the 'Lead On' Citrus course for potential leaders within the Murray Valley citrus region. Any persons wishing to participate, should contact John Tesoriero at the MVCB office on 03 5051 0500.

# Plant Breeders' Rights: Intellectual Property Issues for Horticulture Industries

## **Free Seminar in Mildura, 29 September 2005**

The Australian Centre for Intellectual Property in Agriculture (ACIPA) in conjunction with Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) are holding a series of free seminars on intellectual property issues for growers to be held in various districts throughout 2005.

Recent developments in intellectual property, particularly in the area of plant breeder's rights, are having more and more impact on the horticulture industry.

New varieties are now commonly protected by plant breeder's rights, leading to more growers having to pay tree and/or end point royalties to breeders.

Growers are also being presented with contracts that give intellectual property owners additional rights. These threaten the ability of growers to save propagating material and seed. They also often provide owners with rights to enter onto property to search and seize for breaches of intellectual property.

The purpose of the free seminars will give growers the opportunity to learn about relevant intellectual property issues in particular, plant breeder's rights, end point royalties and contractual issues.

Those who are interested can obtain registration forms and further information from:

### **Carol Ballard**

Centre Manager, Australian Centre for Intellectual Property in Agriculture  
Griffith University, Nathan QLD 4111  
Phone: 07 3875 7772 Fax: 07 3875 5511  
Website: <http://www.acipa.edu.au>  
Email: [c.ballard@griffith.edu.au](mailto:c.ballard@griffith.edu.au)

# New CITTgroup Project & Logo

**CITTgroups**  
AUSTRALIA

The round of funding for the CITTgroup Australia program (funded by grower levies through Horticulture Australia) finishes on June 30, 2005. A new four year project will begin on July 1, with the launch of a new logo.

Growers please take note of the change to the CITTgroups Australia logo.

Apart from the project time frame, project number and logo change, it will be operations as usual.

The Murray Valley component of the project will continue to be co-ordinated through the Murray Valley Citrus Board.

If you would like notice on CITTgroup information sessions and farm walks via email or fax, please contact Kerry at the MCVB on 03 50510 500 or [kerryn@mvcitrus.org.au](mailto:kerryn@mvcitrus.org.au)

## Notes

## from Neil Eagle

The closing of the 2004/2005 year is seeing a larger than normal carryover of Valencias as the fresh fruit marketing component comes to an end and new season's Navels are coming on-line. Hopefully, the processing sector can take up the remaining Valencias through the coming winter period.

This unexpected result is attributable to a number of factors:

- Initial projections were of an average to below average crop in most regions.
- The soaking rains in Nov/Dec 2004 and again in Feb 2005, have resulted in abnormal fruit sizing and hence an increased crop.
- The fresh fruit market, both domestic and export, has been a challenge in moving volumes of Valencias.
- Finally, the processors imported more juice in the first 6 months of this year than in any previous 12-month period. This coincided with some lapses in juice sales due to cooler weather (ie. February).

The lesson from this year's experience is that, as an industry, we must get our crop forecasts much more accurate and have better monitoring of sales (fresh and processed) and of fruit sizing movements.

The 2005/06 crop is forecast to be up in all areas. The sizing appears favourable and hopefully, the blemish and albedo factor will not prevent good packout results. The challenge will be for our industry to move towards developing marketing plans. To this end, ACG organised a Fresh Fruit Marketing and Processing Forum in Mildura on 3 May, 2005.

Our industry will never be successful in marketing until the major players are prepared to move down a more organised path. From the growers' perspective, there is no other initiative likely to provide such a beneficial impact on their bank balances as the achievement of planned marketing.

The progression in this coming year of a Mandatory Code of Conduct in the marketing sector will, of necessity, need to involve the retail sector if growers are to derive any real benefit. The recent articles by Peter Hunt and Kate Adamson in the 'Weekly Times' on the marketing activities and commodity mark-ups to the consumer, from farm-gate returns to producers, highlights this necessity.

*A further area of concern is the push by retailers to remove clear 'country of origin' labelling on imported produce. This must be totally resisted by consumers and Australian producers.*

The ongoing citrus canker situation in Emerald, Queensland is still of great concern. Firstly, that the planned eradication in Emerald (and hence Australia) will be successful and secondly, that the governments will see fit to provide some assistance to the Emerald growers to enable them to survive and eventually re-establish.

The need for our industry to be involved with the Plant Health Agreement with Federal and State Governments will be canvassed in the immediate months ahead.

**Neil J Eagle**  
Chairman, Mid-Murray Citrus Growers Inc.



# Citrus Canker Update (Australian Citrus Growers)



Leonie Burrows – ACG Executive Officer.

In the week commencing 16 April 2005, further confirmed detections of Citrus Canker were identified on the IP2 property at Emerald. The National Management group for the Canker outbreak made a decision on April 21 to destroy the remaining 70,000 citrus trees on the IP2 property. This decision was based on scientific evidence of the likelihood of property infestation. This will mean that nearly 600,000 trees on both infested properties will have been destroyed.

Australian Citrus Growers represents the citrus growing industry on the Consultative Committee and the National Management Group dealing with the Canker issue. We have also been involved in the past weeks in consulting with grower organisations on the vexed issue of whether domestic market access should be granted to Emerald citrus. Obviously, grower bodies throughout Australia are expressing some serious misgivings about the implications of domestic market access on the Australian industry and the possible effects on international trade. The decision on the market access issue will be made in coming weeks, with the various state government plant protection authorities ultimately making the decision on whether access will be granted to their states.

## COUNTRY OF ORIGIN FOOD LABELLING

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) has prepared a Report as the final part of a review of the current regulations covering Country of Origin labelling of food.

Under the current standard, country of origin labelling of unpackaged fruits is required on display in connection with the fruit (unless the fruit is produced in Australia or New Zealand). The new proposal is that origin information may be provided to the customer on request instead of on the display. Also, the country of origin requirements will apply, regardless of origin. This means that Australian and New Zealand produce will also have to comply.

In terms of packaged fruit juices, orange juice and fruit drinks, there are no longer any special requirements for labelling as these products come within the general packaged food standard.

Australian Citrus Growers has a history of consistent and emphatic support for clear, unambiguous truth in labelling for both citrus juice products and fresh fruit. We do not feel that these proposed new standards go far enough in providing consumers with enough information to make informed choices, and they pose a risk to our domestic marketing.

A detailed submission has been prepared and forwarded to FSANZ on behalf of the grower industry. Submissions closed on 4 May 2005.

## CITRUS ACCESS TO CHINA

Australian citrus is one step closer to gaining access to the valuable Chinese market with the release of a preliminary scientific risk assessment draft report last month. This is currently being reviewed by Biosecurity Australia, and Australian Officers have visited China in recent weeks to clarify issues in what is only a very draft document at this stage.

Unfortunately, Australia is not the only country that can foresee the market potential in supplying China's 1.3 billion consumers with citrus, with the United States, South Africa and Uruguay proceeding with trade agreements.

Australian Citrus Growers is continuing active dialogue with China, with relevant quarantine agencies in Australia and through Commonwealth Government political channels. We will be in a better position to move forward when Biosecurity Australia staff complete the assessment of the risks identified by the Chinese following their visit to China.

**Leonie Burrows** ACG Executive Officer

# Research Facility for



The New South Wales Government has signed off on a private treaty to sell land beside at Mourquong for the establishment of a multi-million dollar national Auscitrus research

The facility will give Sunraysia and national growers access to the latest varieties to stay at the forefront of the world market.

Mr Michael Keenan, Director and Treasurer of Auscitrus makes the following comments:

Auscitrus is at an exciting stage of its development as it serves the Australian citrus industry with budwood and rootstock seed for nurserymen and citrus growers.

Auscitrus is the trading name of the Australian Citrus Propagation Association Inc., a "not-for-profit" industry organisation, whose members are state or regional grower and nursery organisations.

It has been in existence since 1991, but preceding organisations based in NSW go back to origins in 1928. It has always had a strong linkage with the NSW Department of Primary Industries/ Agriculture, especially at Dareton, Camden and Gosford.

For some time, Auscitrus has been seeking its own land in the Dareton area. The Minister of Lands has recently advised Auscitrus that the ex-CSIRO land on River Road, Dareton can be purchased from the NSW Department of Lands.

Developmental investigations have begun covering a complete soil survey, water supply from either Western Murray Irrigation's supply to the Coomealla Irrigation Area, which is adjacent, or from the Murray River as a private diverter.

A development plan by consultants Scholefield Robinson Horticultural Services has just been completed to enable a detailed business plan to be prepared.

Progressive negotiations will continue with the NSW Government departments, Wentworth Shire Council, Catchment Management Authorities and the many other organisations to enable the establishment of nursery and citrus tree plantings, office and farm buildings.

Auscitrus will continue to service the Australian citrus industry from its plantings and infrastructure at the Dareton Research Station, where there is a current 10-year Deed of License. Both plantings and infrastructure will be operated in parallel for quite a few years while the new site becomes fully operational.

Further changes in management have strengthened the focal point of Auscitrus on Dareton. Tim Herrmann has taken over as Manager of Auscitrus, based in Dareton, from Mrs. Pat Barkley, from the



# Auscitrus



the Australian Inland Botanical Gardens  
h, budwood and seed facility.

1 Peter Crisp, Michael Keenan and Tim Herrmann of Auscitrus, inspect the Mourquong site for the national research, budwood and seed facility. (Photograph courtesy of Sunraysia Daily)

2 Future location of the national research facility.

beginning of 2005. Pat has managed Auscitrus for the past 3 years in her role as National Citrus Improvement Manager with Australian Citrus Growers. She has provided outstanding technical and personnel knowledge and management with drive and enthusiasm. Fortunately, Pat is available to provide assistance to Auscitrus (and ACG) when needed. Tim shares Auscitrus' vision for the future of the seed and budwood scheme, and he will be responsible for implementing the developments Auscitrus will face over the next few years.

Additionally, the administration of Auscitrus was transferred to Dareton from Gosford (contracted to Agrisec P/L) near the end of 2004. The office is temporarily located in a residence on the Dareton Research Station, adjacent to the Silver City Highway, until new offices can be built on the new Auscitrus property. Auscitrus' administration is now being handled by Mrs. Roz Gribble.

The citrus pathogen indexing and elimination, and the maintenance of virus-free and pre-immunised citrus foundation trees in insect-proof screenhouses, continues at the Elizabeth MacArthur Agricultural Institute, Camden.

Auscitrus continues its role in the importation of new citrus varieties to give growers the very best choice of high health status and

true-to-type varieties and rootstock seed as quickly as possible to respond to market opportunities in Australian and export markets. Privately owned and managed varieties from within Australia and overseas are increasingly being supplied, many of them linking in with the Auscitrus supply.

Evaluation of these new varieties is also paramount, with Graeme Sanderson and the NSW Department of Primary Industries (based at Dareton) taking the lead role in sites and around Australia.

The role and functioning of Auscitrus compares very favourably with similar organisations around the world. As well as developing the new site to provide security of tenure, improve biosecurity of propagule production, and to ensure cost effective production, a nursery accreditation system needs to be established in the near future to give the very best of service and confidence to Australian citrus growers.

**Michael Keenan** Director & Treasurer

# Profile of a Progressive



John and Maureen Bailey enjoying a social outing.

Currently, the impressive buildings and associated infrastructure of EJT Packers consists of two acres of roof and concrete. This provides a good start to profile the considerable progress of the company and its owners, the Bailey family.

John Bailey was born in Mildura in 1947, raised on a dried fruit block in Coomealla and in John's words, became involved with citrus by 'fate'.

John was educated at the Dareton Public School, then Mildura High School from where he matriculated in 1965.

His first employment was with the then Rural Bank of NSW. This lasted for 13 years, interrupted by two years of National Service in the Australian Regular Army. Most of this time was with the 9th. Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment and included service in Vietnam from November 1968 until he was wounded in action in May 1969. After discharge from National Service in October 1969, he returned to work with the Rural Bank. In 1980, John and Maureen (having decided that a young family and a nomadic banking career was not a good mix) returned to Mildura, where John worked in the accounts section of Gallagher, Ryan and Byrne, Solicitors.

Whilst there, he was offered the manager's position at Curlwaa Fruit Supply, as it was known then. 'I walked straight into the 'freeze' of 1982 and still have vivid recollections of the damage caused to both the crop and trees.' Left unemployed as a result, but thankfully with wife Maureen working at the Mildura Egg Floor Society, John became aware that EJT Packers (owned and operated by Joe and Elisabeth Toth) was for sale. Incidentally, the property still retains the original packing shed (120 x 70 feet), although from external appearances, you would not think so. After much deliberation and considerable help from the Toths, John and Maureen leased the 42-acre property and the EJT packing house in April 1983. The option to purchase was exercised in 1984.

'More recently, we have had to face the issue of whether to stay and slowly shrink, or upgrade and become more efficient. In January 2004 the company was restructured, with David Bailey becoming managing director, as part of the family's succession planning to ensure continuity of their service to the Sunraysia citrus industry.

We also have a dedicated management team, led by Kim Anderson (Administration Manager) and Wayne Keating (Production Manager), providing us with solid support.

Succession training is important to us. Basic principles, such as staff working 'with' you, rather than 'for' you apply at EJT and should not ever change. I am pleased our son David has become an essential part of the business having spent 11.5 years as a baker.

The intention now is that Maureen and I will retire from the business within the next five years, as it is a very demanding role being a packer and marketer. I have never had the time to be a grower, therefore the property has always been managed.'

Over the past 22 years the company operation has continuously developed with the packing house tripling its capacity. Packing operations have been streamlined through the installation of the latest photo-electronic sizing, mechanical packing and labelling equipment in May, 2003. These new lines ensure that the company can develop and service their export markets with long lines of consistent product, whilst simultaneously being able to rapidly increase output to meet crucial, peak season, market demands.

The goal is to pack 1 million x 30 litre cartons equivalent annually, utilising all citrus varieties; whilst employing from 20 to 45 staff, (8 of whom are permanent) depending on seasonal demands.

EJT Packers have historically concentrated their efforts into the middle to upper quality and price range for both export and domestic markets.

'We want to supply certain people with a certain product. We will supply all sectors of the market, but will pick and choose who we do supply. It is interesting to note that we still deal with people in the domestic markets that we dealt with in 1983. Therefore, we must be doing something right.'

While they are relatively small producers, having only 60 acres of their own, EJT are medium volume packers, additionally offering marketing and export services. This vertical integration principle provides a strong base for the business. They have approximately 110 grower suppliers with 80 supplying their total crop and working with EJT through a preferred supplier program.

Exporting of fruit commenced in 1985 to Singapore through an association with Gibson Exports Pty. Ltd., in Adelaide. Since then, the two companies have worked closely together in establishing and maintaining a reliable Singaporean and Malaysian market from 1988 to date. Secondary export markets have been established, (including orders through other exporters) with other customers in Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, Korea, New Zealand, European Union and Sri Lanka.

In conjunction with a core grower group EJT are planting new varieties of citrus, which will strengthen their ability to meet emerging markets. The business therefore has good access to early, mid-season and late navels, which will allow a steady export growth for at least the next 10 years. This growth will be supplemented by further plantings of 'easy peeler' style fruits.



# Packing House

John Bailey states that EJT Packers were one of the first citrus packing houses in the Sunraysia region to achieve Quality Certification through AQIS, for full trade description to non-phytosanitary countries. In June 2000, they gained accreditation with AQIS for phytosanitary inspections to approved destinations. In June 1997, ISO 9002 accreditation for receipt, grading, packing, storage and dispatch of citrus fruits was attained. This has since been replaced by HACCP accreditation to international standards.

An interesting aspect of the EJT packing program is what can be referred to as the citrus/avocado mix. In November, 2004 they commenced avocado packing and marketing for a couple of growers which proved an instant success. The growers were well pleased with the returns for their fruit and the wholesalers happy with the presentation of the product.

'We have a new packing line and a new shed and everything handles avocados very well. The decision to do this was a considered one and based on seasonality factors.

We have an excellent reputation with the supply of citrus, but the trend with Valencias indicates production and demand is less than it used to be and the variety has lost a lot of traditional markets because of competition. We decided we could supply a service through avocados and it seemed a logical step to pack and market the product to keep the facility in operation and the staff employed. We intend to develop this to a larger grower base in 2005/06'

When asked about the future of the citrus industry, John made the following comments:

'The profitable future depends on better access and marketing conditions in a number of overseas destinations.

To achieve this, we need to have a stronger and more united voice to Government. Various groups of people are making approaches when the thrust should be through one peak body. As an industry, we are widely dispersed geographically, which is part of the problem.'

John Bailey concluded our interview by stating that the ultimate aim of EJT Packers was to provide a continuous, cost competitive, efficient and rewarding citrus and avocado packing and marketing service to their growers; whilst simultaneously providing wholesaler and consumer satisfaction.

My overall impression is that EJT Packers is a family centred enterprise that knows where it is going and is determined to get there. John Bailey is, and will remain, a strong citrus industry advocate and practitioner. His foresight and researched enthusiasm is reflected in the company's progress to date and its positive predictions for the future.

E. Warhurst Compiler

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## Irrigating Citrus in Winter

Irrigation management in winter, as with all times of the year for citrus, is important to ensure the best chance of producing healthy trees and good quality fruit. Proper irrigation scheduling in winter has received more attention in recent seasons due a lack of local rainfall.

Jeremy Giddings – Irrigation Officer, NSW Department of Primary Industries.

The following points should be considered by citrus irrigators in the June to September period:

- Growers should be reminded that in winter and spring, the most active part of the rootzone is in the top 30 cm only. While at other times during the season the full rootzone depth (usually 80-100cm depending on soil inhibiting layers) should be monitored, during winter monitoring should be concentrated on this relatively shallow depth to determine irrigation timing. Low water use occurs at depth, and irrigations should not be pushed too deep at this time of year.
- As fruit develops, the canopy drops. Ensure that water is still reaching the soil moisture monitoring tool, and therefore providing a representative indication of the level of soil moisture. Increasingly, dry readings from soil moisture monitoring tools (tensiometers etc) located on the other side of trees opposite low level sprinklers are a common problem. Moisture monitoring tools should be located near sprinklers in areas of average application rate, without obstruction from tree foliage or weeds. Placing catch cans around the monitoring tools to confirm water application is an option.

- Winter is an ideal time to carry out leaching irrigations. Murray River water quality is excellent at the moment and relatively low tree water use allows the opportunity for greater water penetration. More irrigators are preferring to have soil salinity sampling carried out, and the results of these tests should be used to determine the level (if any) of leaching required.
- Be careful not to overestimate effective rainfall during winter. This is particularly the case for irrigators with drip and under tree sprinklers applying water in a strip along the tree line only. In this situation, most of the active, healthy roots will be concentrated under the canopy. The canopy on mature trees will shield the active rootzone from most rainfall events. Following rainfall, irrigators often delay reading their soil moisture monitoring equipment, believing that 'everything has received a good drink'. Water stress and salt burn (as the trees take up rain water from the mid row where the soil is usually higher in salt) often occurs. Read your monitoring equipment or dig a hole under the canopy shortly after rainfall to gauge how much rainfall has become available to the active rootzone. A further irrigation may be necessary much sooner than initially thought.

Jeremy Giddings Irrigation Officer  
NSW Department of Primary Industries

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# Sunraysia Area Consultative Committee



Tom Crouch – SACC Executive Officer.



## What is an Area Consultative Committee?

Area Consultative Committees (ACCs) are non-profit, community-based organisations funded by the Australian Government under the Regional Partnerships programme.

There are 56 ACCs across Australia serving rural, regional, remote and metropolitan communities. The national network effectively covers the whole of Australia. ACCs position themselves as key regional stakeholders to build networks and partnerships to find local solutions to local problems. Through these networks, ACCs promote and disseminate information on Government priorities and programmes for the benefit of business and the community. ACCs are an example of how the Australian Government is working in partnership with business and the community to achieve regional economic growth.

The Chair and every member of an ACC are committed volunteers drawn from the community, local business and government. (Mr Don Carrazza is the current Chairman, Sunraysia Area Consultative Committee. Mr John Tesoriero, Chief Executive MVCB is also a member.)

## REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

### Simple access to Australian Government support for Regional Projects

The Australian Government's approach to regional development is to work in partnership with communities, government and the private sector to foster the development of self-reliant communities and regions. This approach is consistent with the Government's framework for developing Australia's regions: Stronger Regions, A Stronger Australia. Regional Partnerships is a programme that delivers on the Australian Government's approach to regional development.

A total of \$308m is available through Regional Partnerships over the four years from 2004/05 to 2007/08.

[www.regionalpartnerships.gov.au](http://www.regionalpartnerships.gov.au)

### Who can apply?

Entities registered under State or Commonwealth legislation eg. Corporations ACT 2001 (with some exceptions as listed in the guidelines), can apply for Regional Partnerships funding.

### This includes:

- Non-profit organisations
- Local Government
- Co-operatives
- Associations
- Registered Charities
- Private Sector
- Community Councils (Indigenous Councils).

### What type of projects will be considered for funding?

The programme focuses on four areas:

**Strengthening growth and opportunities** by investing in projects that strengthen and provide greater opportunities for economic and social participation in the community'

**Improving access to services** by investing in projects that, in a cost-effective and sustainable way, support communities to access services. It will give priority to communities in regional Australia with a population of less than 5000;

**Supporting planning** by investing in projects that assist communities to identify and explore opportunities and to develop strategies for action; and

**Assisting structural adjustment** by investing in projects that assist specifically identified communities and regions adjust to major economic, social or environmental changes.

### On-the-ground Support

Area Consultative Committees (ACCs) will continue assisting applicants to develop good ideas into high quality projects by identifying appropriate funding sources, linking project proponents with information and potential partners, and providing support in preparing applications. Sunraysia ACC is your local ACC and can assist you to capitalise on local knowledge and resources, and promote links between industry, government and communities. It also provides the department with comments and a recommendation on your project. This is a key factor in the assessment process. Involving the Sunraysia ACC in the project development phase will reduce the assessment time with the department, so it is wise to make contact early.

For more information Executive Officer Tom Crouch or Jenny Neaves can be contacted on (03) 5023 8656 or visit their website: [www.sunraysiaacc.com.au](http://www.sunraysiaacc.com.au)

## CITTgroups South Australian Best Practice Tour

The Murray Valley CITTgroups visited two orchards and the SARDI Loxton Research Station in April, 2005.



1 Presentation of Fruit sizing trials. 2 Group Shot. 3 Presentation to the group.  
4 Solara South Orchard. 5 Craig Wooldridge from Solara South discusses management issues with Justin McPhee and Dean Richards. 6 Rootstock trial showing attendees the different rootstock affects on tree growth.

The study tour left Mildura by bus early on the 12th April, to visit Solara South Citrus Orchard and Packingshed, SARDI Research Station and Arnold & Sons property, all situated around Loxton.

### Solara South

Solara South is a 500 hectare property with 310 hectares of citrus and expanding. It is one of the largest commercial orchards in the Riverland. Craig Wooldridge, Horticultural Manager of the property, showed the tour group the old and newer parts of the orchard. With a change of ownership to Timbercorp and in management to Chiquita, the orchard will no longer be growing their nursery trees and will be focusing on production.

Young plantings consist mainly of traditional varieties, Washington Navels and Imperial mandarins. Planting mix is 25% Navels, 15% Valencias, 55% Easy Peels and 5% Lemons. Nutrition is managed differently on separate components of the orchard ranging from the traditional fertiliser regime to the Martinez Open Hydroponics Technology on the younger section. Irrigation requirements vary, with drip irrigation using 7 to 8 megalitres of water and sprinklers using 11 to 12 megalitres. It must be noted that the sprinklers are watering larger trees.

### SARDI Research

Andrew Thompson from SARDI, presented the fruit sizing trial work he undertook with Peter Gallasch over the past two seasons, looking at the timing and rates of applications. The update on the fruit sizing sprays was excellent following Peter Gallasch's presentations in the Murray Valley through May 2004.

Further investigations are currently continuing into the rates and timings of both GA3 and 3,5,6-TPA for fruit sizing, together with research into spray coverage and volumes to improve thinning with hormones.

Andrew also led a guided tour around SARDI's Loxton Research Station focussing on varietal and rootstock, giving growers the opportunity to see different varieties growing on alternative rootstocks under replant situations.

Geoff Furness from SARDI gave an impromptu presentation on the SARDI sprayer, which is currently being commercialised and may soon be available to inspect in Sunraysia.

### Pyap Produce

The Arnolds at Pyap were winners of the South Australian 2004 Navel Packout competition. This was a real credit to them considering they only purchased the property in 2002. Ryan and Michael Arnold led the farm walk around the property to view the management practices put in place to turn a run down orchard into a viable business.

The Arnolds currently manage 38 hectares of citrus planted to Valencias, Navels, Lemons, Mandarins, grapefruit and 4.5 hectares of vines. On taking ownership of the property in July 2002 and utilising outside advice, they heavily pruned/hedged in September 2002 due to no crop on the trees. Drip irrigation was installed in November 2002, and they are currently utilising 8 megs per hectare per year on the citrus. Irrigation is monitored with the Diviner 2000 portable rod. Irrigations are applied daily from mid-September up to twice daily in heat waves in mid-summer. Fertigation is a slug dose application three to five times per week. (As many fertilisers are not compatible they cannot apply all that are required in one irrigation.)

Ryan Arnold and Craig Wooldridge, who were participants in the Citrus Board of South Australia 2004 Citrus 'Lead-On' program, covered aspects of this course during their presentations.



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*Cont'd from previous page...*

Anthony Callipari from Agrichem sponsored the day, ensuring there were refreshments for the trip home, and provided the opportunity for participants to informally discuss the involvement of Agrichem in the citrus industry.

Evaluation of the tour was extremely positive. Some grower comments on what they liked about the day were:

- Good visit to Pyap Produce to see orchard rehabilitation
- Solora South - very good tree health, crop load and fruit size
- Andrew Thompson's presentation was of value
- Rejuvenation of neglected, but otherwise healthy trees at Pyap was remarkable
- Discussion about growth hormones was useful
- Learning and networking, exchanging views and perspectives
- Gaining extra on farm knowledge.

- Interesting to see other farms and how they operate
- Catching up with other growers and hearing their thoughts and questions
- Differences between states and Ag Dept information and research
- Spray gear discussion was appreciated
- Solora Farms set-up and tour
- Meeting others in same industry

Information was sourced from South Australian Citigroup Co-ordinator, Kym Thiel which led to the property visits. Kym also assisted with the organisation of the event.

Notes are available from Kerry Needs at the MVCB office: 58 Pine Avenue Mildura, phone 0407 325 934, or email [kerryn@mvcitrus.org.au](mailto:kerryn@mvcitrus.org.au)

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Item Name	\$ Price	Item Name	\$ Price
<b>BOOKS</b>		<b>NET BAGS</b>	
Citrus Disease and Disorders	26.00	Grapefruit 3 kg net bags - per 1000	178.75
Citrus Growing Manual	22.00	Imperial 1.5 kg net bags - per 500	89.38
Citrus Pests & Their Natural Enemies	85.50	Navel 3 kg net bags - per 1000	178.75
Good Bug Book	44.50	Valencia 3 kg net bags - per 1000	178.75
Physiology Notes 04/2003	22.50		
<b>CD'S</b>		<b>BOARD ROOM &amp; EQUIPMENT HIRE</b>	
CD Citrus Pests & Their Natural Enemies	45.00	Half day Board Room hire	45.00
		Full day Board Room hire	110.00
		Half day Projector Multimedia hire	110.00
		Full day Projector Multimedia hire	220.00
		Coffee Tea Biscuits - Board Room hire	1.50
<b>MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS</b>		<b>CITREP ADVERTISING</b>	
Citrus Peeler (no card) - bulk sales only	0.45	QUARTER page (B+W)	70.00
Citrus Peeler Card - bulk sales only	0.35	THIRD page (B+W)	95.00
Citrus Peelers - Complete	1.00	HALF page (B+W)	140.00
Cranston Gauge	37.00	FULL page (B+W)	275.00
Hand Lens	8.50	QUARTER page (COLOUR)	160.00
Valencia Meto Fruit Labels (DIX)	55.00	THIRD page (COLOUR)	210.00
MRL Chemical Residue Testing	75.00	HALF page (COLOUR)	310.00
Plastic Juicer	3.50	FULL page (COLOUR)	610.00
Sizing Ring America (Yellow)	22.00	FLYER (1 page insert)	300.00
Sizing Ring Domestic (Orange)	22.00		
<b>TESTING EQUIPMENT</b>			
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Phenolphthalein PH Indicator	44.00		
Pipette	5.00		
Refractometer REF103 Brix	340.00		
TDS Solid Tester pocket (PH WATER TESTER)	125.00		

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